

Committee on Aging be authorized to meet Wednesday, May 19, 2004 from 2:30 p.m.–5 p.m. in Dirksen 628 for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, May 19th, at 2:30 p.m.

The purpose of the hearing is to receive testimony on S. 900, a bill to convey the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project, the savage unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, and the Intake Irrigation Project to the pertinent irrigation districts; S. 1876, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain lands and facilities of the Provo River Project; S. 1957, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to cooperate with the States on the border with Mexico and other appropriate entities in conducting a hydrogeologic characterization, mapping, and modeling program for priority transboundary aquifers, and for other purposes; S. 2304 and H.R. 3209, bills to amend the Reclamation Project Authorization Act of 1972 to clarify the acreage for which the North Loup division is authorized to provide irrigation water under the Missouri River Basin Project; S. 2243, a bill to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of Alaska; H.R. 1648, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain water distribution systems of the Cachuma Project, California, to the Carpinteria Valley water district and the Montecito water district; and H.R. 1732, a bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the Williamson County, TX, Water Recycling and Reuse Project, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Elizabeth Prescott, a fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor during consideration of this legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Bod Adebo of Senator BINGHAM's office be given the privilege of the floor during the pendency of S. 2400.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Matt Hiester, a legislative fellow in my office, be given floor privileges for the purpose of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SAFE, ACCOUNTABLE, FLEXIBLE, AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT OF 2003

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I want to discuss with the Democratic leader an approach that might enable us to move forward to conference on S. 1072, the 6-year reauthorization of our Nation's surface transportation laws.

While I am proud of the bipartisan agreements reached by the bill's managers that got us to this point, much work still remains, and it is important that we start as soon as possible.

There are significant differences with the House bill, so this is likely going to be a challenging process. I want to make sure all Senators know it is unrealistic to expect the House will agree with all our provisions and that we will likely have to make significant changes to S. 1072. But as we make those changes, we should make them together.

The transportation bill we passed this year was a model of bipartisan cooperation that was marked by good faith on both sides. That is the essence of the agreement I am proposing, a commitment from both sides that they will work in good faith in conference to get the best possible result. I have spoken to Senator INHOFE, who will chair the conference. He has agreed he will not pursue a conclusion to the conference, nor sign any conference report that would alter the text of S. 1072 in a way that undermines the bipartisan working relationship that has existed in the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his leadership. I have discussed this with my colleagues and can commit wholeheartedly to the good-faith process he has proposed. Our side understands that changes will have to be made, and we are not entering this process demanding a specific outcome on any provision. Instead, we are asking any changes to S. 1072 be the result of the mutual agreement of the lead Senate conferees acting in good faith.

By moving S. 1072 through the Senate, Senators INHOFE, BOND, JEFFORDS, and REID have already demonstrated they can make that process work. If the process should break down due to disagreements over either transportation policy or extraneous provisions, then we understand he and I will not bring such a conference report to the floor.

Mr. FRIST. That is correct, so long as the Democratic conferees are acting in good faith, and I have every expectation they will. Our goal is to reach a conference agreement that reflects the balance and broad bipartisan consensus S. 1072 achieves. That will be the test of good faith for both sides. I think we can do that, and we will not bring a bill to the Senate floor if it does not reflect that commitment.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I thank the leader again for his leader-

ship. He has agreement from our side, and we look forward to the successful conclusion of this important legislation.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the House-passed highway bill, H.R. 3550; provided further that all after the enacting clause be stricken and the text of S. 1072, as passed, with the addition of the amendment which is at the desk, be inserted in lieu thereof; the bill then be read a third time and passed; further, the Senate then insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the Chair then be authorized to appoint conferees on the part of the Senate with a ratio of 11 to 10.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 3219) was agreed to, as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3219

On page 40, line 9, strike "\$50,000,000" and insert "\$60,000,000".

On page 83, line 10, strike "\$50,000,000" and insert "\$60,000,000".

On page 164, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

“(3) MITIGATION IN CLOSED BASINS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A State may use amounts deposited in the State fund for projects to protect existing roadways from anticipated flooding of a closed basin lake, including—

“(i) construction—

“(I) necessary for the continuation of roadway services and the impoundment of water, as the State determines to be appropriate; or

“(II) for a grade raise to permanently restore a roadway the use of which is lost or reduced, or could be lost or reduced, as a result of an actual or predicted water level that is within 3 feet of causing inundation of the roadway in a closed lake basin;

“(ii) monitoring, studies, evaluations, design, or preliminary engineering relating to construction; and

“(iii) monitoring and evaluations relating to proposed construction.

“(B) REIMBURSEMENT.—The Secretary may permit a State that expends funds under subparagraph (A) to be reimbursed for the expenditures through the use of amounts made available under section 125(c)(1).

On page 407, strike lines 3 through 8 and insert the following:

Section 1214(d)(5)(A) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (23 U.S.C. 202 note; 112 Stat. 206) is amended by striking

The bill (H.R. 3550), as amended, was read the third time and passed.

THE CALENDAR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar Nos. 439 through 454, en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to consideration of the bills en bloc?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendments to S. 1848 and H.R. 417, which are at the desk, be agreed to; all committee amendments, where applicable,